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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Postal Regulations and Censorship/Postal Rates for Domestic and Foreign Mail, Money Orders, Telegrams.

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. "The following information on the Polish postal system dates to Feb 54.

Postal Regulations and Censorship

2. "No special forms have to be filled in when sending letters in Poland. When sending parcels one has to fill in a covering address card. Ordinary letters to addresses within the country are thrown into ordinary mailboxes. There are special yellow mailboxes for air mail.

3. "Letters to a foreign address cannot be thrown into a mailbox; they must be taken to the post office in an open envelope. The proper postal official checks on their contents - whether the letter contains anything more than a letter, e. g. money. Should he note anything suspicious, e. g., a map printed matter, snapshot of a landscape, bridge, etc., he asks the sender for his identity papers and turns the letter over to the censor. Should the envelope contain only an ordinary letter, he closes the envelope and does not ask for identity papers.

4. "An ordinary letter to an addressee within Poland takes about 10 days on an average. A letter from Warsaw to Praga takes four or five days. A local express letter (to a recipient in the same town) takes six - twelve hours. An express letter to another town arrives a day or two earlier than an ordinary letter. Air mail letters travel more quickly, e. g. an air mail letter from Warsaw to Wroclaw takes four or five days to arrive.

5. "Although postal communication is very slow, letters and parcels are not lost in the mail as a rule. Should a loss occur, there are special forms on which to make a complaint.

6. "Letters from abroad usually reach the Polish recipient seven or eight days after the letter has arrived at the Central Post Office in Warsaw. As far as may be judged, all letters from abroad and going abroad are cleared through this post office. Warsaw does not censor all this correspondence in detail: there is only a general check-up; 'sample tests' are made of a certain number.

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The censor gets only those letters which appear suspicious or have been mailed by or to persons on a special list. Every post office in Poland has a list of suspicious persons in its area and is responsible for checking on their correspondence.

7. "Letters from the USSR or Satellite countries are subject to the same treatment as letters from other foreign countries.

8. "All persons corresponding with foreign countries are registered at the post office of their place of residence. The letters they get or send are entered in a special file index which notes the day of mailing or reception and the country of destination or origin. Not all these letters are regularly censored, despite registration. But if somebody in a given postal district gets a letter from abroad for the first time, this letter is invariably sent to be censored.

9. "A refugee who worked at the Warsaw post office in 1952 says that technically the censorship is carried out in such a way that the censor clips off one end of the envelope, checks the contents, then reseals it by some chemical means so that it cannot be detected afterwards whether or not the letter has been opened.

10. "Photographs and snapshots of people, interiors of houses, etc., may be sent to friends by post. There is no evidence that the censors pay more attention to registered letters than to ordinary ones.

11. "Parcels from abroad are not checked at the post offices but at certain frontier centers, the largest of which is at Gdynia. The parcels are very carefully checked; often coffee or cocoa is transferred to another bag. Sometimes tins of food are opened, but this happens only when the parcel is suspect. After the check the contents of the parcel are dropped into a paper bag which is provided with a customs' stamp. In this bag the parcel is then sent to the destination post office. The recipient must present himself at the post office. The parcel is handed to him in the closed bag.

12. "The Soviet garrisons in the frontier areas have their own Soviet postal system. Even the private correspondence of Soviet officials and their families moves through this system. However, in Warsaw, for instance, where there are several thousand Soviet officials, no such Soviet postal system exists.

13. "Ordinary letters are delivered at the houses of recipients. Registered letters and parcels must be fetched at the post office. Poste restante letters exist, but as far as we know here [redacted] private citizens may have no post boxes. 50X1-HUM

14. "The general tendency of control and censorship is to prevent the outflow from Poland of every kind of information and document considered a state secret. In parcels from abroad the greatest attention is paid to printed matter: magazines, books, etc.

Postal Rates

15. Domestic rates:

Postcard (local)	0.40 zl.
Postcard (home)	0.60
Letter (local), weight up to 20 gr.	0.40 zl.
" " " " 250 gr.	0.60
" " " " 500 gr.	1.15
" " " " 1000 gr.	1.50
" " " " 2000 gr.	1.90

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Letter (home), weight up to	20 gr.	0.80 zl.
" " " "	250 gr.	1.15
" " " "	500 gr.	1.90
" " " "	1000 gr.	2.55
" " " "	2000 gr.	3.15

(These postages include 0.20 zl. for Warsaw's rehabilitation fund)

Printed Matter:

up to	50 gr.	0.20 zl.
" "	250 gr.	0.60
" "	500 gr.	1.15
" "	1000 gr.	1.50
" "	2000 gr.	1.90
" "	3000 gr.	2.25

Postage for registration 0.95 zl.

Postage for express letter 1.90

16. To foreign countries:

Postcard	0.25 zl.
Letter up to 20 gr.	0.40
Letter per every additional 20 gr.	0.25

Printed matter - for every 50 gr. 0.10 zl.

Parcels for every 50 gr., 0.15 zl. but miniumun is 0.75 zl.

Registration 0.95 zl.

Express letters 0.80 zl.

17. Domestic money orders:

Up to	10 zl.	0.90 zl.
" "	30 "	1.40 "
	50 "	2.00 "
	100	2.75
	200	3.75
	500	6.90 "
	1000	10.00 "
	2000	15.00
	5000	25.00

Money order by telegraph - additional charge of 6.75 zl.

18. Telegrams:

Ordinary telegram, minimum 10 words	4.50 zl.
Every additional word	0.40
Express telegram	double
Press telegram	0.20 zl. per word
Letter telegram, maximum 25 words (BLT)	4.50
Every following word	0.15

19. Domestic parcels:

Weight	Maximum 100 km distance	Maximum 300 km distance	More
Up to 3 kg	2.20	3.20	4.00
5 kg	2.70	4.30	6.00
10 kg	4.10	7.20	9.50
15 kg	5.40	9.50	12.50
20 kg	6.80	11.80	16.00

Express - double postage. Home delivery - 1.60 zl.

Books: about 33% of the parcel postage.

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